



Glossary of PR Terms

Audience—group or groups to whom the public relations program, or any part of it, is directed.

Bio Sheet—gives information about person to be interviewed, plus suggested questions for discussion.

Clip Art—simple graphics used to enhance printed and electronic material.

Contact—person listed on a press release as the source for news and on a PSA for further information.

Copy—the words to be used in a published piece or a broadcast.

Deadline—day and hour the news copy must be in the media contact's hands to make the next issue or broadcast.

Feature Article—story based more on interest than news.

Format—specifications for length, style, shape, look of a printed piece; a general plan of organization or arrangement, as on a radio or television show.

Image—mental picture the mind creates when words or names are mentioned; the subconscious impression a person has of an organization, institution, or other person.

Information sheet—one-page description of an organization including goals, purposes, structure, statistics.

Lead—first paragraph of a news story that usually includes who, what, when, where, why, and how.

Masthead—the organization's name displayed at the top of page one.

Media (also called communication or news outlet)—all the avenues through which a chapter sends out its information, such as newspapers, radio, television, bulletin boards, or displays.

Media Contact—member of the press; the professional staff of news media, charged with gathering, editing, and communicating the news.

News—information deemed timely, important, and interesting by a particular editor; ideas with a new twist, new ideas, or old ideas that have ongoing value.

- “Hard” news is especially timely and covers current breaking stories in areas such as politics, finance, world affairs, disasters.

- “Soft” news is of a less urgent nature and contains more human interest.

News Advisory—highlights who, what, where, when, and why of an event or story. Sent to media contacts to inform them of newsworthy chapter events.

News Release—statement prepared and distributed to the media by a group or individual. It has very strict requirements for preparation.

Op-ed (opposite editorial)—page facing the editorial page in newspapers. In increasing numbers of papers, devoted in part to statements from nonstaff sources.

Public—any group of individuals a public relations program seeks to influence.

Publicity—information from an outside source used by the news media based on its news value.

Public Relations—what you do to build a positive image of your group or yourself; actions of an organization or individual in promoting good will between itself and its publics.

Public Service Announcement (PSA)—brief message made during a broadcast. The message must be “for the public good” and from a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. It announces an event, campaign, or issue and is aired for no charge.

Target—to set a goal; to aim toward.

White Space—area on a printed or electronic page where no type, photos, or illustrations appear.